
FFR

Issue № 166: In my defense, I wasn't supervised.

Fowl Feathered Review is a quarterly, a disordered artifact of the human impulse to categorize and consume the ephemeral. Produced by the Springwound Mammoth Pancake Coalition–an entity distinct from its waffle-centric counterpart–it is birthed under the Fowlpox Press imprint. Virgil Kay, its editor, presides over this enterprise from a paper canoe adrift on the Passagassawakeag, a river of dubious depth and even more dubious inhabitants. Surrounded by featherheads and their aquatic card games, Kay's reign is absolute, his word the final arbiter in the transformation of boastful souls into doormats. Layout and visual conceits are the province of Cookie Granola, while melodrama and histrionics fall under the purview of Childe Harold. Silent Bill, in his characteristically taciturn manner, provides necessary pauses. The review's structural integrity, or lack thereof, is the domain of Unkie Bob, whose talents extend to the mitigation of typographical errors and the prevention of electrical conflagrations. Everett Enótita serves as Kay's indispensable amanuensis, and the Ecum Secum Literary Brain Trust, in a gesture of dubious beneficence, offers nominal financial support. Printed upon the verdant expanse of Bald Porcupine Island, and laced with the enigmatic Kraa, a bioengineered culinary enigma, the Fowl Feathered Review remains a testament to human ingenuity, or perhaps merely a symptom of cultural decline. ISSN: 1929-7238.

"I am an observer of life, a non-participant who takes no sides. I am in the regimented society, but not of it."

--Moondog, The Viking of 6th Avenue



Return Policy:
If this magazine does not meet your expectations, please return it to us in its original condition for a full refund, minus the cost of enlightenment.

Submissions



Fowlpox Press: A Submission Guide for the Determined (or Deluded)
To the Aspiring Artist (or Sandwich Enthusiast):

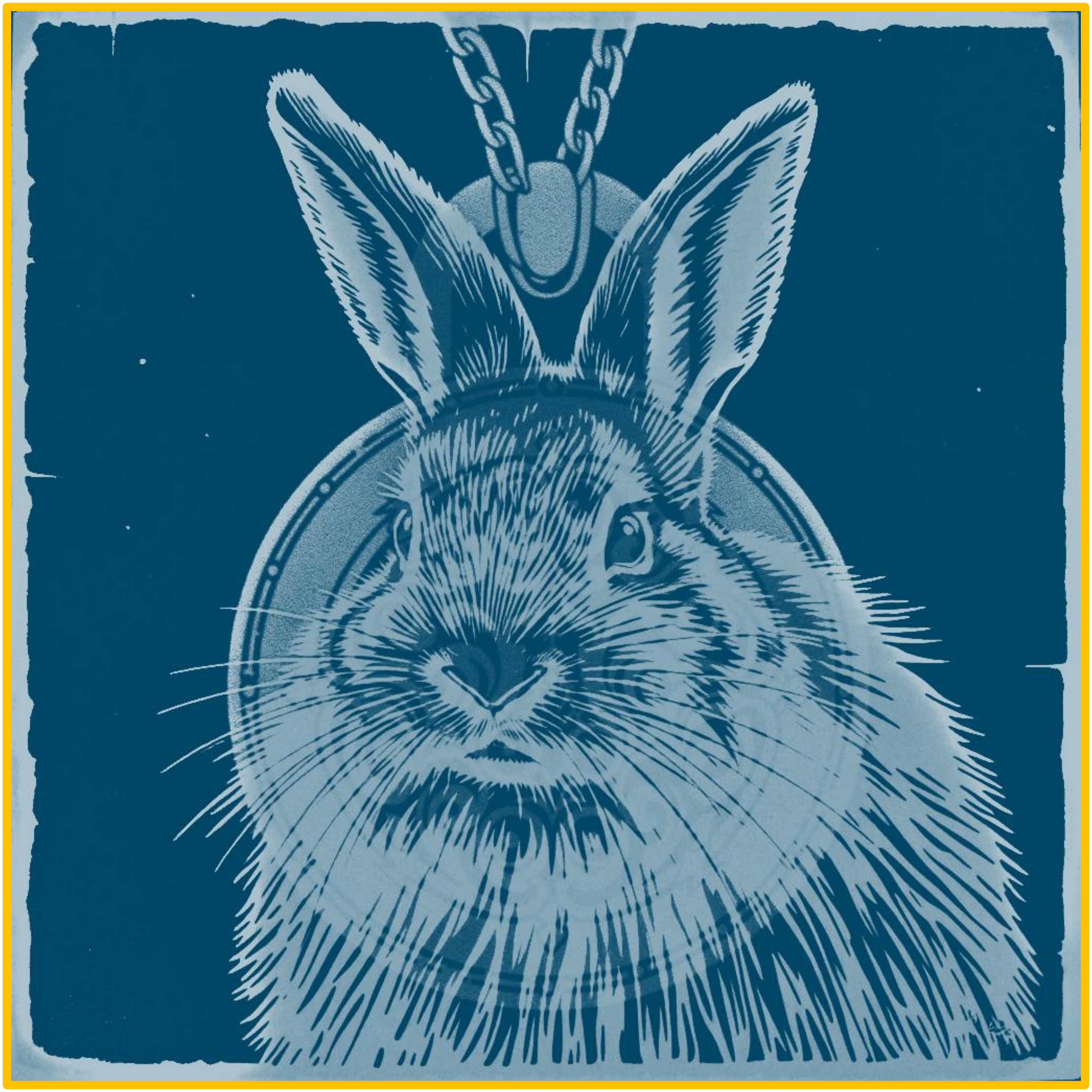
1. **Craft** (or **Culinary Construct**): 2-227 poems, a numerical range that hints at both ambition and a troubling lack of self-editing, may find their way to our digital doorstep (fowlpoxpress@mail2poet.com). Alternatively, for the visually inclined, paintings numbered 2-953 (a prolific career, or perhaps a basement overflowing with forgotten canvases?) are welcome. We are also, inexplicably, open to submissions of twelve-inch sandwiches.
2. **The Gatekeeper:** Address your offerings to Virgil Kay, Editor. In posession of remarkably discerning taste, or so he believes, Virgil is a rooster of some renown, a creature of instinct and inexplicable confidence. His title, "China Wok Habitue," suggests a broader palate than one might expect from a bird, though it's more likely a testament to the local takeout joint's generous portions. (**Please note:** Include a bio, a desperate plea for recognition that will likely join the unread masses in the digital purgatory of our slush pile.)
3. **Format:** Poems, those valiant attempts at capturing the human experience in meter and rhyme, should be attached in a Word document or PDF. Paintings, windows into your soul (or a weekend spent with Bob Ross reruns), must be submitted in JPEG, TIFF, or a format our aging technology can comprehend. Jokes, if they exist, should be delivered in MP3 format. We are, alas, not equipped to handle the nuanced art of the live performance. Sandwiches, a curious offering in the realm of artistic expression, require clear plastic wrapping and a small packet of Kewpie Mayonnaise. (**Pro-tip:** The Kewpie packaging is, undeniably, a work of art in its own right, and we encourage you to admire it before consumption.)
4. **The Cycle Continues:** We exist in a perpetual state of acceptance and rejection. A Sisyphean task, some might say. We receive submissions 365 days a year, a testament to the relentless hope, or perhaps blissful ignorance, of aspiring artists. However, with a heavy heart (and a full crop), we must inform you that rejections also occur 365 days a year.
5. **The Sandwiches:** Ah, the sandwiches. These, unlike your artistic endeavors, find a permanent home within our editorial sanctum. Virgil, in his infinite wisdom, has determined that a diet rich in carbohydrates is essential for maintaining his regal demeanor.
6. **Leap Year Follies:** Leap years, those extra days gifted by the whims of the calendar, offer no reprieve. Aspiring poets, it seems, are undeterred by such temporal anomalies. You are, however, cordially invited to "take a flying leap" during these additional 24 hours.

Please proceed with caution. Artistic aspirations are a delicate dance, and the path to publication is littered with the fallen hopes of countless dreamers. But hey, maybe your sandwich is killer. Just remember, Kewpie or bust.

Fowl Feathered Review | Poets & Writers (pw.org)

“Non ignora mali, miseris succurrere disco.”

— Virgil, The Aeneid



Residue and Resonance: Fragments of a Synthetic Bloom

By Hjørdis Dorete Brun

Part 1: Locket, Linoleum

The palm, cool. Gold's weight, yes. But the lost. How long, this lost? Linoleum, a spread. Not a question, but a spread. Vacuum, window. A space. Not supposed to be. Dust, intentions. Forgotten.

Hum. Vacuum. Teeth's fillings. Pressure. Not sound. Rain, window. Garden, blurred. Roses, grey. Petals, photos, decaying.

Locket. Face. Man? Signal, bad tune. Grandfather, pipe. Stranger, letters, static. Hungry. Not her. Before.

Clasp. Memory's resistance. Tremor, house. Furniture, moved. Light, dust. Fragments. Conversations. Laughter, regrets. Locket, not storage. Locket, is. Vacuum, erasure.

Hose. Blind hunger. Time, sucked. Identity, frayed. Man, smile. Cruel. Warning. Window, dark. Roses, gone. Grey. Pulse, locket. Absences, vacuum's voice.

Part 2: Microplastic Alphabet

Absence, air, algorithm, always
Bottle, bloom, blue, broken
Crystals, coastline, crumbling, code
Dust, decay, dissolving, dark
Echo, Eileen, elements, erasure
Fracture, faces, forgotten, fraying
Grandfather, ghosts, gut, grey
Hunger, holds, hose, Harding
Inflammation, intentions, interior, is
Just, joined, journeys, jagged.
Kidney, knowing, kind, kept.
Locket, letters, linoleum, layers
Memory, morass, moria, memoria
Network, nuances, now, number.
Orange, observation, of, onward.
Particles, pulse, pattern, pressure.
Question, quiet, quantum, quivering.
Roses, resonance, regrets, rabbit.
Signal, static, superposition, settled
Time, tremor, teeth, Tobias.
Understanding, universes, unraveling, until.
Vacuum, versions, vitamins, voice.
Window, weight, whiskers, warning.
Xenon, xylophone, x-ray, existence.
Years, yellow, yielding, yesterday.
Zero, zone, zenith, zoom.

Part 3: Rabbit, Circuits

Tiber, the rabbit. Shakes. Whiskers, tremor. Dust, a connoisseur. Nuances. Weight. Now dust. Synthetic. Regret, sweetener.

Window. Mr. Harding. Angles, ambition. Bottling plant. Poetry, decay. Ankle, bite. Security.

"Menace." Broom. "Rabid."

Burrow. Stage sets. "Eileen." Obsession. Connections, lost. Tobias, pause. Glance.

Vitamins, crushed. Potency. "Faster." Orange powder. Shifts. Network, possibilities.

Window, screen. Gardens, versions. Flickering. Vacuum, portal. Memories, discarded.

Locket, everywhere. Walls, floor, air. Pattern, algorithm.

Vacuum, dismantled. Repurpose. Motor, rewired. Radio tubes. Signal, resonance. Microplastics, breakdown.

Signal, ripple. Harding, nausea. Plant, shudder. Bottles, bloom. Crystals. Beautiful, terrifying. Transformation.

Window. Smile, Tiber. Garden, resolved. Roses, vibrant. Sky, blue. Stage set, adjusted. "Eileen." Audience, understanding. Dust, settled.


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Porcelain Echoes: The Sundial's Treasure

By Bertil Gudmund Kaspersen

Part 1: *The Toilet and the Machine*

She finds the toilet in the museum’s courtyard, placed improbably between a gramophone repair stand and a vendor selling brass monocles. It is pristine white, old-fashioned in its curves, but wired with an interface panel blinking lazily in the afternoon light. A sign above it reads:

MULTIMEDIA KNOWLEDGE UNIT – FLUSH FOR ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

The festival moves around her—goggles and corsets, the scent of oiled metal, a distant hiss of steam. She should not be here. Or rather, she should be here differently.

She presses the handle. The toilet flushes.

A voice emerges from the bowl, garbled, metallic, shifting between languages before settling:

"You have always known where it is buried."

She steps back.

Then the mother and child appear—Laotian, dressed in simple walking shoes amid the polished boots and Victorian frills. The mother’s voice is quiet but clear:

“We saw you flush it. You understand what it means?”

She does not. Or she does, but the knowledge is still assembling itself, like dust spinning into constellations in the air.

The child holds an old air rifle, the wood worn smooth. A sundial and compass are embedded in the stock—too intricate to be mere decoration. The child tilts it, catching the afternoon sun. Shadows shift, lengths contract, and a point of light strikes the museum wall.

A trolley bell clangs.

The number 4387 pulses behind her eyes.

Part 2: The Gunstock Sundial Measures More Than Hours

The shadow of time is heavier than porcelain,
its weight measured in dust, in the spaces between flushes.
The bowl fills, empties, not with water,
but with memory’s slow exhalation.
The child holds the rifle like a telescope,
aiming at nothing, aiming at everything,
the compass needle spinning
in a language no one taught her.
The past is not behind but beneath,
waiting to be uncovered
like a machine buried in the earth,
gears still turning, unseen.
On the trolley, the mother whispers:
"Not all time moves forward."
The wheels screech against the rails–
a sound like a flush in reverse.

Part 3: Trolley 4387 and the Hollow Hour

The trolley moves, but the landscape does not change.
She sits across from the mother and child. The toilet, impossibly, is between them, bolted to the floor. The mother watches her, eyes steady.
“You remember yet?”

She looks at the lid, porcelain smooth.
“No,” she says. “Yes.”

The trolley's windows do not show the festival anymore. They show a field, a place where machines once stood, their bones rusting into the grass. The child lifts the rifle, angling the sundial. A thin line of light traces a path along the trolley floor.
The conductor, in his blue uniform, does not seem to notice. Or perhaps he does, but he has seen stranger things.

The toilet flushes on its own.

Inside, not water now, but words rising from the whirlpool:
Dig where the compass settles.

The trolley shudders. The mother takes her hand.
It is time to get off.



The Refracted Epics of Eighth Street: A Lover's Eye and the Static's Song

By Chayyim Karl Bukowski

A grimy pane, a cold, unblinking eye, reflects Palestine draped across a Philadelphia clothesline. Jerusalem shimmers, a mirage in the city's humid breath. Slut's wool dances, each fiber a lost frame from Lubin's celluloid dreams, a forgotten reel flickering in the vacuum's groaning lament. Memory, a fine talc on velvet, the clasp undone, moments unspooling, light fracturing through time's strata. Lubin's ambition, Abrams' laundry, the holy dust of shattered dreams, all refracted through the glass, a mosaic of what was and what might have been.

Grandma Abrams' Canvas Sky & The Philadelphia Static's Lament

Eighteen-ninety-eight, the summer hangs thick, a shroud over Philadelphia's brick row houses. Rabbi Meyerowitz, a man of reasoned debate, watches Siegmund Lubin's backyard with growing unease. Grandma Abrams's pristine laundry is gone, replaced by painted canvas, a Holy Land of dubious geography. "Palestine, Rebecca," he sighs, "on Eighth Street. Next, he'll be parting the Schuylkill."

Rebecca, pragmatic, merely worries about her tomatoes. The "racket," however, is another matter. Lubin, a whirlwind in a Panama hat, directs a chaotic Passion Play, a backyard spectacle fueled by beer and delusional ambition. Neighbors, saloon regulars, and even a stoic butcher's assistant play biblical roles, their performances a glorious,

drunken mess. Judas, Frankie "Fingers" Fratelli, mixes treachery with vaudeville routines and slurred whiskey requests. Simon Peter, "Numbers" Nat, rolls dice in the alley, invoking divine intervention and point spreads with equal fervor.

And then there's "The Philadelphia Static," a nascent musical collective, their sound a discordant symphony of feedback loops and found objects. Imagine Kerouac, wired on benzedrine, jamming with physicists and a butcher wielding a meat cleaver on a washing machine. Their score for the Passion Play is a swirling miasma of banjo dissonance, amplified harmonica shrieks, and the unsettling drone of a rusty vacuum cleaner dragged across corrugated iron.

One sweltering afternoon, during the Sermon on the Mount, the Static launches into a frenzied passage. Lines blur, dialogue dissolves, reality fractures. The painted Palestine ripples, the dust rising from the street swirling into the canvas sky. Judas stumbles into the Last Supper, demanding a cheesesteak. Jesus, improvising, points to the sky, muttering, "Heavy scene unfolding, man."

Rabbi Meyerowitz, watching from his window, feels a strange detachment. Lubin's backyard transforms into a desperate, beautiful striving, a flawed, human attempt to grasp something monumental. The lost trinket, the droning vacuum cleaner, the backyard apocalypse – all coalesce into a moment of bewildered understanding.

The Lover's Eye & The Vacuum's Memory

Years later, the house on Eighth Street stands silent, the canvas Palestine faded, Lubin’s dreams dissolving into amber dust. Elara, Rabbi Meyerowitz's great-granddaughter, sifts through the attic, sunlight fracturing through grimy panes, illuminating swirling slut's wool and dust bunnies, echoes of forgotten images.

The attic smells of mothballs and time. A hulking, pre-war vacuum cleaner stands in a corner, its canvas bag ripped, leaking dust. Beside it, tucked in a cracked leather trunk, she finds an antique silver paste lover's eye, with a tigers eye pendant bow locket. Tarnished, its clasp broken, a single, painted eye stares out, framed by the tigers eye

bow. It is heavy, old, engraved with a delicate, looping "A." Annie Abrams? Lubin's wife? Elara traces the inscription with her finger, feeling a strange resonance. She opens the locket. Inside, faded, almost ghostly, are two tiny photographs: a stern-faced woman, and a man with a wild glint in his eye, a man who looks vaguely familiar.

Suddenly, the static hum of the ancient vacuum cleaner seems to amplify, filling the attic, vibrating through the floorboards. The slut's wool and dust bunnies dance faster, coalescing, shifting. Elara blinks, and for a dizzying moment, the attic walls seem to dissolve.

She isn't in the attic anymore. She is looking through a window. *Another* window? Across a backyard. Canvas flapping in the breeze. The Philadelphia Static – she recognizes the name from old family tales, legends of sonic anarchy – is tuning up, their instruments...were they instruments? ... things that buzzed and whirred and scraped.

And there is Lubin, the man from the photograph, directing chaos with theatrical flourishes. She sees Judas, drunk, yes, Frankie "Fingers," still demanding cheesesteaks even across the gulf of decades. She sees Jesus, patient, long-suffering, rolling his eyes at the absurdity. She sees her great-grandfather, a younger Rabbi Meyerowitz, peering from *his* window, a look of bewildered understanding on his face.

The timelines are bleeding, layering. The vacuum cleaner in the attic, the static in the air, the lover's eye in her hand – they are all conduits, temporal palimpsests. Dust of memory, clinging to objects, vibrating through the very fabric of the house.

The Passion Play scene shifts. It is the crucifixion now. But superimposed, shimmering faintly over the chaotic backyard tableau, Elara sees something else. She sees the Lubinville studio, burning, flames licking at celluloid negatives, erasing unreleased dreams. She feels the despair of lost foreign sales, the quiet collapse of a film empire, the return to optometry, the slow fade.

The lover's eye feels cold in her hand. She closes it, snapping shut a fragment of time, a captured echo. The attic walls solidify again. The vacuum cleaner falls silent. The slut's wool and dust bunnies settle, slower now, heavier.

Downstairs, the city hums with the indifferent pulse of the twenty-first century. Elara descends, the lover's eye heavy in her pocket, a tangible weight of memory. She leaves the vacuum cleaner in the attic, a silent monument to the dust of ambition, the fragile beauty of fleeting images, and the enduring, slightly mad human need to capture light and shadow, even if it means crucifying Jesus in your backyard, soundtracked by a band from the future (or maybe the past, or maybe somewhere in between), all for the flickering magic of the moving picture. The truth, she realizes, isn't in the clear narrative, but in the fractured echoes, the slut's wool and dust bunnies silent story, and the single, painted eye that witnessed it all.



The Burning Background

By Olga Marszałek

Does the canvas exhale a sigh of ochreous rust and fading cinnabar, or is it we who, gazing upon its fevered surface, find our breath suspended in a tremor of bewildered recognition? For here, framed in the rigid geometry of a square, unfolds a phantasmagoria of pigment and implication, a tableau vivant sculpted from the very resin of longing. Two figures, or perhaps emanations, spectral twins born of the same incandescent idea, stand poised in mirrored symmetry, their profiles as stark and unyielding as ancient glyphs. They reach, with tentative gestures, across a vortex not of empty space, but of concentrated yearning, a swirling nebula of molten amber and nascent gold. This, we intuit, is no mere rendering of the visible world, but a clandestine aperture onto a realm where the laws of gravity and the logic of clocks dissolve into the shimmering ether of pure, unadulterated desire.

These beings, sculpted from light and shadow, present themselves in a language beyond features, beyond the crude semaphore of face and limb. Their countenances are smoothed to an unsettling serenity, their forms traced in the bold strokes of midnight ink, yet pulsating within with a blood-orange luminescence that suggests an inner fire, a silent combustion of the soul. Are they specters of lovers long parted, phantoms of friendship fractured in the relentless mills of time, or perhaps adversaries, locked in an eternal, voiceless ballet of opposition? Their eyes, rendered as echoing voids, black pools reflecting not the light of day but the phosphorescent glimmer of subterranean caverns, offer no solace, only the invitation to plumb deeper into the warren of unspoken meaning.

The background, a furnace of simmering hues – the crimson sigh of extinguished sunsets, the ochreous murmur of forgotten genesis – erupts from these central figures, a chromatic maelstrom threatening to engulf all in its fiery embrace. It is as if the very fabric of perception itself is unraveling, revealing the raw, unbound currents that pulse beneath the veneer of the quotidian. And at the nucleus of this incandescent storm, a glyph, a sun-like sigil forged from concentric circles and radiating lines, flares with an

inner light. Its rays, delicate tendrils of pure consciousness, stretch outwards, not to illuminate, but to bind, to weave the disparate threads of this composition into a tapestry of enigmatic unity.

Let us momentarily draw breath from this painted fever dream, and consider for a moment the dust-laden air of a Philadelphia garage in the mid-1960s. There, amidst the tang of soldering fumes and the scent of old guitar cases, young men, apprentices in the alchemical art of sound, conjured vibrations from wood and wire. They called themselves "The Grassland Apothecary," a name that spoke perhaps of their nascent artistic aspirations, their desire to hold up a mirror to the swirling currents of their age. But the name, like a poorly tuned amplifier, lacked resonance. It felt thin, ungrounded. Then, one sweltering afternoon, amidst a haze of amplifier hum and youthful deliberation, the name shifted, crystallized, into something richer, something charged with a deeper, more visceral truth: "Fortune Bookie" (Jackson, 2004). In that simple act of renaming, they acknowledged not just reflection, but the very grit of existence, the tenacious will to persist, to leave an echo in the indifferent corridors of time. This striving, this mirroring of inner aspiration in an external form, resonates with the poised figures on the canvas, each seeking connection across the painted chasm.

The painted hands, suspended in their almost-touch, remain eternally poised, locked in a silent plea, a gesture of yearning that transcends the boundaries of the frame. The central mandala, a meticulous clockwork of cosmic intent, neither expands nor contracts; it simply *is,* a radiant cipher at the heart of this painted universe. Time, within the confines of this square, ceases to flow linearly; it becomes instead a viscous, shimmering substance, clinging to the surfaces, distorting perspectives, rendering all in a perpetual state of becoming. The fiery background hums with an energy that is not merely visual but tactile, almost audible – a low thrumming vibration felt not in the ears but in the very bones. And the lines, precise yet subtly trembling, betray the hand, the fallible, human hand that dared to conjure this vision.

Could it be that this canvas is not mere paint and linen, but a solidified dream, a reflection not of what *is,* but of what profoundly *desires* to be? Do these mirrored figures, in their silent communion, whisper secrets not only to each other but to the very fabric

of the cosmos itself, secrets encoded in the language of color and form, a language we glimpse only in the fleeting moments between waking and dreaming? And finally, as the painted dust settles once more upon the vibrant surface, we are left to ponder: *If this canvas is a mirror, reflecting our innermost desires, then what, pray tell, is reflected in the desire to touch, to bridge the painted void between ourselves and the echoing image of our own yearning?*

Sources:

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3. "Surrealism." Metropolitan Museum of Art, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/surre/hd_surre.htm.
4. Jackson, John A. (2004). *American Bandstand: Dick Clark and the Making of a Rock 'n' Roll Empire.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.


04/55

DO NOT SWALLOW

By Irwin Glascow

The Spatula's Confession in Harmony, NJ

Harmony, New Jersey, is a town where the diner's neon sign flickers in time with the town's collective heartbeat. Marla, 43, insomniac proprietor of Harmony House of Pancakes, discovers a spatula fused to her palm at dawn. Its handle, warped like a spine, hums a tune she recognizes as her mother's lullaby. The diner's grill sizzles with eggs that burst into origami cranes when cracked. Regulars–truckers, a taxidermist, a man who claims to be auditing the town's dreams–sip coffee that smells of burnt hair.

Marla's left eye begins to see in reverse: the sugar dispenser pours salt, the clock ticks backward, and a corn kernel sprouts from the floor, growing into a stalk that pierces the ceiling. The spatula whispers, "Stir the gray matter, Marla. The cleanse begins where the recipe ends." She obliges, plunging it into a pot of boiling syrup. The liquid congeals into a gelatinous mass, pulsing like a lung. A maggot crawls out, fat and iridescent, and drops into a customer's oatmeal. He eats it, unperturbed, muttering about the "fertilizer subsidy bill."

By day 3, Marla's right ear excretes a stream of dried corn husks. The taxidermist collects them, stitching them into a map of Harmony's sewage system. The spatula, now fused to her arm up to the elbow, drags her to the diner's freezer. Inside: a shoe tree, roots coiled around a jar of formaldehyde containing a human molar. The label reads, "Property of Dr. Alvin T. Spooner, 1954. Do not swallow."

The story fractures here. Text spirals into a vortex: Marla stirs the syrup the syrup stirs Marla the spatula is a bone the bone is a river the river is her mother's voice the voice is a maggot the maggot is the town the town is a shoe the shoe is empty empty empty.

She wakes—or doesn't—on day 14. The spatula is gone. The diner's walls are lined with corn. A single husk doll hangs from the ceiling, its face stitched with her own hair.

Rid-X for the Ghost Colonies
(Abridged Field Notes from Palmyra, NJ)

In Palmyra, the Delaware River exhales silt thick as custard. Here, the dead trade recipes for pickling regret. A child's shoe tree grows in the cemetery, its branches heavy with sneakers that whisper in Yoruba and Low Dutch.

The cleanse is a slow unraveling: men cough up kernels that sprout into porch swings, women sneeze constellations. The mayor, a woman with gills, hosts town hall in a septic tank. "Progress," she gurgles, "is a digestive process."

We are all compost here. The maggots have maggots. The corn has teeth. The spatula, abandoned in the muck, writes its own cookbook: 101 Ways to Serve a Nervous Breakdown.

Do not ask what grows in the negative space between the stalks. Do not lick the dew.

The Shoe Tree's Epistle in Ong's Hat, NJ

Ong's Hat, population 6 (or -3, depending on the moon phase), is a town that exists only when photographed. Its sole inhabitant, a retired chemist named Dr. Lila Voss, lives in a geodesic dome filled with jars of fermenting shadows. She's writing a dissertation on "Cerebral Drainage and the Alchemy of Regret." Her research tool: a shoe tree outside her window, its branches strung with loafers that vomit ectoplasm at midnight.

Lila's 14-day cleanse begins when she swallows a corn kernel labeled "Lot 13: Nostalgia Additive." Her vision splits: one eye sees the present (a raccoon dissecting a pocket watch), the other sees 1923 (a barn dance where attendees trade limbs like party favors). A spatula materializes in her throat, scraping away memories. Each scrape dislodges a maggot, which she collects in a jar labeled "Soul Sediment."
By day 7, her body rejects language. Words bubble from her pores: "mother," "root," "static." The shoe tree's roots invade her dome, snaking through her bookshelves. They absorb her dissertation, replacing it with a new text written in fungal spores: "The mind is a septic system. Flush wisely."

The narrative collapses into a palimpsest: Lila is the spatula is the corn is the maggot is the town is the jar is the shadow is the regret is the regret is the regret.
On day 14, she evaporates. The dome remains, now a museum. Tourists (who insist they're not tourists) report hearing a spatula clinking in the walls, stirring something just out of view.

Metacognitive Commentary (Embedded as Marginalia in the Poem)

(Palmyra, NJ – Footnote 4) The shoe tree is not a metaphor. It is a lung. The lung is not breathing. It is singing. The song is not a song. It is a recipe. The recipe is not edible. It is inevitable.

(Ong's Hat, NJ – Footnote 9) To write this was to unwrite myself. The page is a mirror. The mirror is a wound. You, reader, are the maggot. Congratulations.



Belly Full of Dreams

By Hugh Crawford

The Hungry Heart in Corned Beef City
In the heart of Decatur, Illinois, where the Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) factory's hum became the town's heartbeat, Manager Edwin's hunger was not for power or prestige. It was a raw, primal hunger for the unrefined, the offal of life itself. His office, perched above the fluorescent sprawl of the factory floor, felt increasingly claustrophobic with each passing second.

Descending from his sterile lookout, Edwin ventured not to the production lines but to the refrigerated sanctum of offal. The chill of the room enveloped him, yet his body burned with an inner fire. Each tray of hearts, livers, and kidneys offered a symphony of tastes and textures, a forgotten melody played on the lips of his ancestors.

Temporal Palimpsest as Tempura-Drenched Pancake

- Past: A child in Honolulu, inhaling the scent of plumeria and listening to his father's ʻohe hano ihu, the prelude to a meal.
- Present: The Decatur factory, the offal, the shame that tasted like copper.
- Future: A vision of darkness, the city plunged into shadow, a semi-truck jackknifed against a power pole, and an elderly woman's triumphant spelling of "syzygy" in an empty schoolhouse.

As the factory's hum ceased, plunging the city into darkness, Edwin, knee-deep in offal, raised an imaginary nose flute to his lips. The phantom melody echoed through the empty, darkened factory—a haunting serenade to his dual hunger, both physical and soul-deep.

Spring Reverb Echo Room

ECHOES IN THE OFFAL ROOM, DECATUR:

In the chilled heart of the ADM plant, offal trays gleam, a manager's hunger blooms, like the fingerholes of a forgotten aangún,
each note a weight, a corporeal text, mold blooming in the damp, of unspoken desires.

Grief, divided into nine parts, occupies each tray, each organ a room, in the house of his soul, echoing with the sounds of a nose flute, a child's memory, of a father's love, a phantom limb.

TEXT DECAYS HERE:

The city's heartbeat falters, a spelling bee victory, a solitary light, not triumph, but the void, between memory and now.
...and Regenerates

Rendering, his heart cooked, fat and water parted, leaving a meal, of unanswered questions, the aangún's melody, through the void.

DAWN'S SHADOW:

- Perspective 1 (The Liminal Observer): Watches Mrs. K, 86, stand alone in the abandoned Lincoln Elementary School, Decatur, the sole participant in a phantom spelling bee. The silence is a tangible presence, thick and heavy.
- Perspective 2 (Mrs. K, Simultaneously): Sees a packed auditorium, the roar of the crowd, the spotlight on her. In her pocket, a small, worn aangún, its melody a counterpoint to the distant sirens of the darkened city.

QUANTUM LEAP IN TIME/SPACE:

Mrs. K's victory speech, a whisper in the empty room, speaks of a life of melodies and meals, of offal prepared in the old ways, the aroma as vivid as the sound of the aangún.
Negative Space Narratives:

- The unspoken connection between Mrs. K and Edwin, a thread left for the reader to weave.
- The city's fate, existing in a state of quantum uncertainty.
- Mrs. K leaves the school, the wind carrying the faint melody of the aangún, the city's awakening a distant, ambiguous sound.


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BIG PINK

Let it be known that the contents below are based on a letter received from a Mister Horace Grearson of Denver, Colorado, who, in the third week of last month, was moved to send in longhand a missive regarding the remarkable details contained.

BIG PINK: A CARTOGRAPHIC FEVER DREAM OF DISSOLUTION

1. Calibration: Synthetic Breath-Machines

Rosa Zigrīda Jellycheer's apartment TREMBLES— A rug INHALES PINK fibers PULSING with cosmic secrets!

NORRIS stands— Texan titan gripping the MONSTROUS Colt Walker of 1847, A six-gun SO immense it requires BOTH hands and TREMBLING knees to maintain!

2. The Heart Shot

The sun MISBEHAVES— A renegade ELEMENT waiting to be DISCIPLINED!

NORRIS BELLOWS: "SAN ANTON'!" The massive Colt Walker ERUPTS A cannon-like BLAST that TEARS the sky!

The weapon's recoil— A PREHISTORIC punch HURLS Norris BACKWARD SCREAMING into a hidden gully!

QUICKSAND RISES— Hungry geological MOUTH Swallowing the Texan whole!

A YODEL breaks— Half-terror Half-defiance ECHOING through pink-filtered light!

MEMORIES DISSOLVE Dust motes SUSPENDED In a landscape WHERE gravity FORGETS its job!

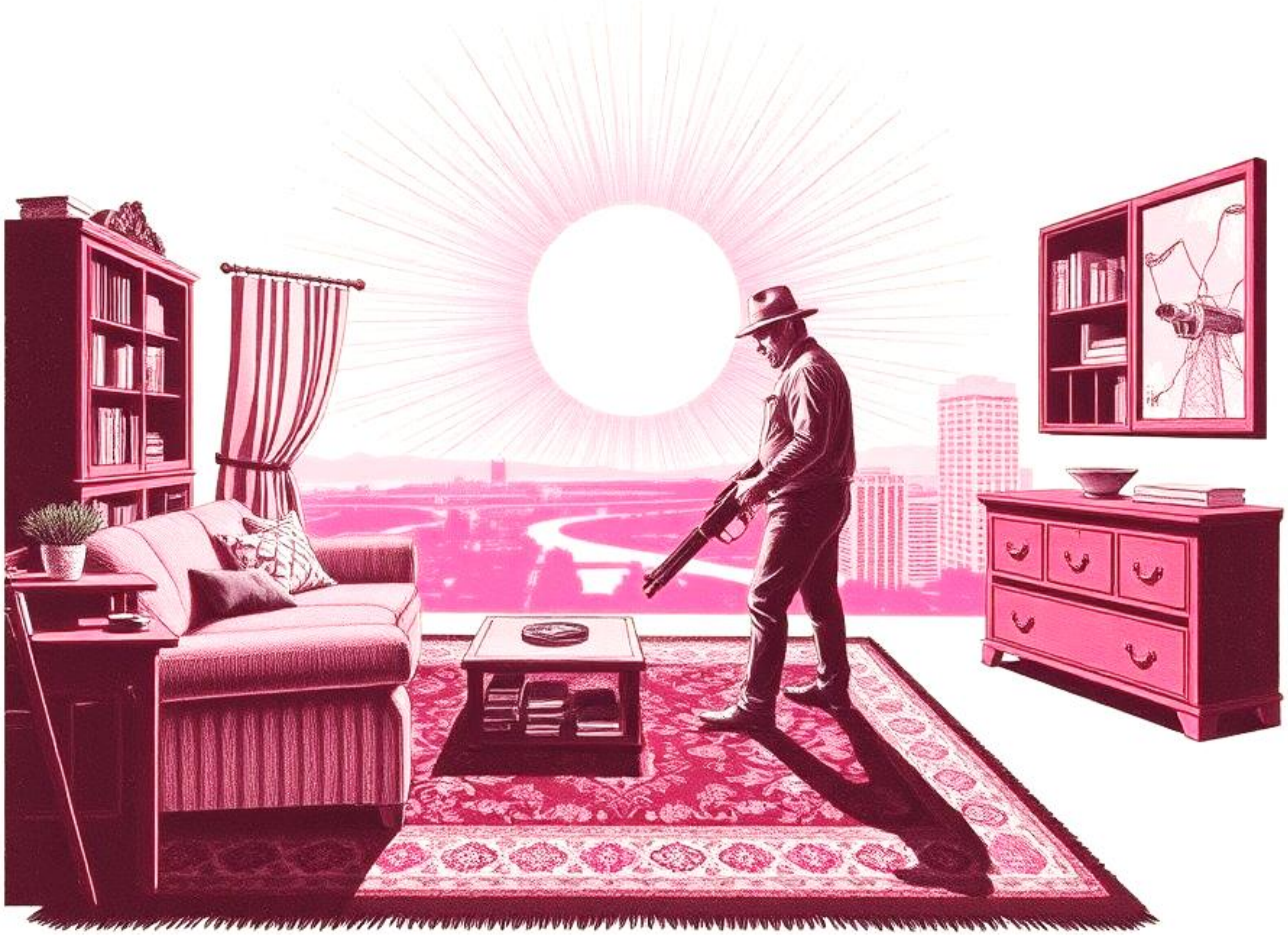
The scale in Rosa's apartment Spins ZEROS A mathematical REQUIEM for one man's absurd intervention!

3. Aftermath: Rosa's Theorem

Fibers BREATHE The rug SIGHS Time FOLDS into impossible geometries.

LISTEN! The city WHISPERS Something fundamental has CHANGED Yet NOTHING has moved.

The sun— Unshot Unapologetic CONTINUES.



Citations

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